

**City of Calistoga  
WATER & WASTEWATER REVENUE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**



Members: Diane Barrett  
Placido Garcia  
Nicolas Kite  
Paul Knoblich  
Gary Kraus  
Larry Kromann  
Don Williams

**MEETING NOTES  
Wednesday, April 28, 2010 – 5:00 P.M.  
Village Inn & Spa  
1880 Lincoln Avenue, Calistoga**

1 **The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.**

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3 Committee Members present included, Diane Barrett, Placido Garcia, Paul  
4 Knoblich, Gary Kraus, Larry Kromann, Don Williams

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6 Others Present were City Manager Jim McCann, Public Work Director Dan  
7 Takasugi, and Administrative Services Director Bill Mushallo, and Michael Quast.

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9 Committee Members Absent: Nicolas Kite, Senior Civil Engineer Jim Smith

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11  
12 Chairperson Knoblich called the meeting to order and commented on what a  
13 great job everyone did last night.

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15 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

16  
17 None

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19 **Wastewater System:**

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21 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** confirmed the updated meeting  
22 schedule and presented an overview of wastewater rate process and losses, and  
23 what can we do more efficiently to move this forward.

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25 **Chairperson Knoblich** expressed as a Committee our desire would be to learn  
26 the overall concept and then move on to the detail and all public comments  
27 limited to 3 minutes.

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29 **Committee Member Knoblich** requested to move public action to the end of the  
30 session.

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32 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** talked about the process and  
33 sources (city, hot and cold water, storm water) which impact the system and how  
34 they come through.

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36 **Committee** open discussion on inflow and infiltration, and the ability to limit  
37 storm water flows to waste water treatment plant. (WWTP).

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39 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** presented an overview of current  
40 rate structure.

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42 **Committee Member Kromann** asked the question, is the City charged for water  
43 or waste water rates at all.

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45 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** responded not at this time.

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47 **Michael Quast** commented that ten years ago when the system was revamped it  
48 was put into effect that the City was to pay for their fair share but whether that  
49 has occurred or not, Michael does not know.

50

51 **The Committee** requested to have additional detailed information to include  
52 background, strength, concentration of typical flows (SFR, Transient, Spa,  
53 Restaurant, etc.).

54

55 **Committee's** open discussion on the rates for each category.

56

57 **City Manager McCann** suggested to capture questions and explain how we got  
58 to these numbers. **McCann** stated our system here is common to most, except  
59 we have one source of ground water.

60

61 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** continued his presentation and  
62 general questions are asked related to the presentation.

63

64 **City Manager McCann** again agreed further clarification is needed.

65

66 **Public Works Director Takasugi** stated the City has an organizational  
67 separation between collection and treatment. Both are very specialized.

68

69 **City Manager McCann** gave a brief history of the new waste water treatment  
70 plant and because it was new there was uncertainty of the cost of operations; we  
71 now have four or five years of plant operations experience to go forward.

72

73 **Committee Member Kromann** asked the question if there were any particular  
74 parts of it that was a big surprise.

75

76 **City Manager McCann** responded yes, energy consumption, chemical  
77 consumption, and particularly the first year or two the sludge production

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79 **City Manager McCann** also stated we are required to do things at certain levels  
80 which are a must. **McCann** continued it is extremely expensive and governed by  
81 the State Water Resources Control Board every few years. Right now we have to  
82 get that Discharge Permit renewed.

83

84 **Chairperson Knoblich** asked to review the private sewer lateral replacement  
85 rebate.

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87 **Public Works Director Takasugi** responded that we do not have too many  
88 residents who take advantage of the rebate which is a program in the code that  
89 allows private residents to replace their sewer lateral. The assumption is they  
90 are leaking and many are leaking pretty badly. Statics show this is where a lot of  
91 infiltration comes from.

92

93 **Public Works Director Takasugi** explained the lateral is the pipe that runs from  
94 the house to the sewer main which in the street. Each resident has the  
95 responsibility of maintaining that sewer lateral.

96

97 **City Manager McCann** shared some history where a few residents were having  
98 chronic back-up problems and it was determined the problem was from their  
99 laterals which had been crushed. **McCann** continued to say because the  
100 problem was in the street the thought was that perhaps there should be some  
101 sharing of costs. This is what this small lump sum of money is about. The code  
102 states the City will share 50/50 of the costs for the lateral.

103

104 **Chairperson Knoblich** made reference to the photograph of East Washington  
105 Street trunk line and manhole and asked if the City will be looking to repair this in  
106 another two or three years.

107

108 **City Manager McCann** stated this is an immediate problem and is being fixed  
109 right now where the \$2.8 million is a project that would replace the trunk line back  
110 up to Franklin by the Fire Station which is needed regardless of whether any  
111 development occurs; it is beyond its service life.

112

113 **Chairperson Knoblich** questioned if there would not be an aggressive plan for  
114 funding for the repairs of the infrastructure due to many leaking mains.

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116 **City Manager McCann** referred to inflow and infiltration line item which lists  
117 \$120,000 per year for three years which is actual improvements.

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119 **Chairperson Knoblich** suggests if we solve the infiltration problem we should  
120 have lower water treatments.

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**Public Works Director Takasugi** would like to have a master plan which identifies the areas which are in need more than others and that is where you need to put your money. As of right now right now, we do not know because it has not been measured.

**Chairperson Knoblich** stated he hates the thought of paying a consultant a \$100,000; if it is so obvious there are so many leaks, let's just get started.

**Committee Member Kromann** commented on the uniqueness of Calistoga and the geothermal water where he does not know of another area that has so much water near the surface which has to impact the waste water and in which pipes are literally sitting in water actively deteriorating the pipes.

**Chairperson Knoblich** questioned the \$400,000 total dollar amount of the Master Plan Study as it is three times \$120,000 over the next seven years to do work.

**City Manager McCann** explained the Master Plan is inclusive of all aspects of the waste water system

**Public Work Director Takasugi** stated a RFQ (Request For Quote) process will be followed.

**City Manager McCann** stated the last water study had been done in 1989 or 1990.

**Chairperson Knoblich** stated moving to Assumptions.

**Committee Member Kromann** questioned the labor costs in this area and have we cut back on the labor so much it is inefficient because we do not have the people.

**Public Works Director Takasugi** stated the department has had recent retirements which has left vacancies and has added to stress of the staff. Positions will be filled.

**City Manager McCann** stated our staff is a thin organization and we have had observations from the Dept. of Health Services and also the State Water Resources Control Board who believe we do not have sufficient staffing.

**McCann** continued to say this is a twenty-four hour operation, there are folks on-call, overtime, which is an issue Dan, Warren, and myself talk about a lot on how to balance. We comply with the standards. Demerits lead to fines.

165 **Public Work Director Takasugi** commented if he had a choice to take on an  
166 Apprentice at a the lower rate or a Jr. Operator at a higher rate, he would take  
167 the Jr. Operator as he doesn't have staff or time to train the Apprentice.  
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169 **Committee Member Kromann** commented this is an indicator which means  
170 you do not have sufficient staff.  
171

172 **City Manager McCann** asked the Committee if they would want to look at the  
173 staffing levels.  
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175 **Chairperson Knoblich** asked if we wanted to move on to the next step or come  
176 to a consensus.  
177

178 **City Manager McCann** suggests there are some questions: how does the  
179 concentration and the loading fit in, the numbers, capital projects, master plan,  
180 staffing.  
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182 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** continued presenting.  
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184 **Administrative Services Director Mushallo** stated the goal would be to make a  
185 complete recommendation with a balanced budget.  
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187 **Committee Member Williams** commented he is not satisfied. Williams stated  
188 he is in the residential category and with the Mobile Home rates there's some  
189 discrepancy extended into Multi-family, primarily single family residential who are  
190 low rate users being charged \$0.30 more  
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192 **City Manager McCann** stated we all need to know the detail of the information  
193 presented and it needs to be explained.  
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196 **Adjourned**

197 The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m. to the next scheduled meeting of the  
198 Water and Wastewater Revenue Advisory Committee on April 30, 2010,  
199 Community Center, 1307 Washington Street, Calistoga, 5:00 p.m.  
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